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FALL/WINTER 1999

# Home Building

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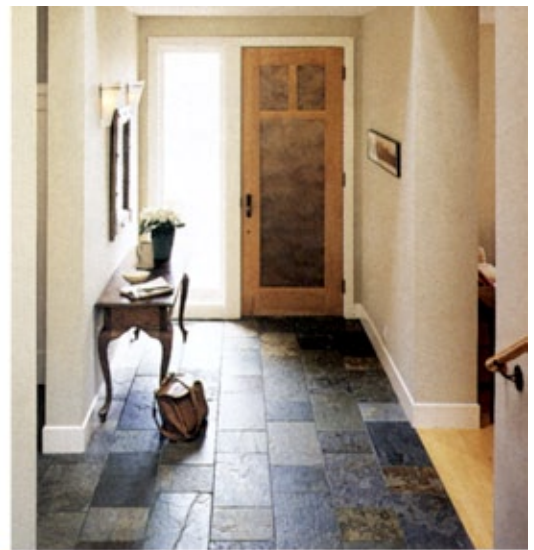


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# casual comfort



LIVABILITY COMES FIRST

IN AN INNOVATIVE

CRAFTSMAN-STYLE

ABODE DESIGNED

FOR AN ACTIVE

NORTHERN

CALIFORNIA FAMILY

**W**HEN THE OAKLAND HILLS, CALIF., BRUSH FIRES DESTROYED ANNETTE AND TOM COUNTS' 1930s-era cottage-style house and the surrounding neighborhood, the young couple, like most of their neighbors, were determined to rebuild. Unsure of exactly what style suited them but certain they wanted to expand, they consulted architect Chris Wasney, of Cody Anderson Wasney in Palo Alto, who drove them through a stately section of the Berkeley hills where several Shingle-style bungalows caught their eye. "We fell

PHOTOGRAPHS BY

MATTHEW MILLMAN

STYLING BY

SARAH BALL

**OPPOSITE:** In typical Craftsman character, the exterior is sheathed with red cedar shingles. **TOP RIGHT:** Durable slate tiles combine with a handsome maple-and-bronze paneled door to create a warm welcome in the entry hall. **ABOVE:** In the living room, an exotic hardwood mantel and maple floors reflect the homeowners' preference for simple beauty and elegance.



fit for a family







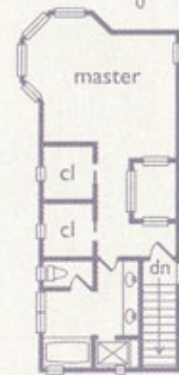
MAIN-LEVEL LIVING  
 AREAS FLOW  
 TOGETHER, UNIFIED  
 BY NATURAL WOOD  
 MILLWORK, FLOORING  
 AND FURNISHINGS

in love with the Craftsman aesthetic,” Annette recalls. “But we wanted our new house to be bright and spacious. Chris helped us realize what we were after.” The collaboration bore happy fruit indeed: a modern interpretation of the local vernacular, complete with three bedrooms and 2,370 sq. ft. of family living space.

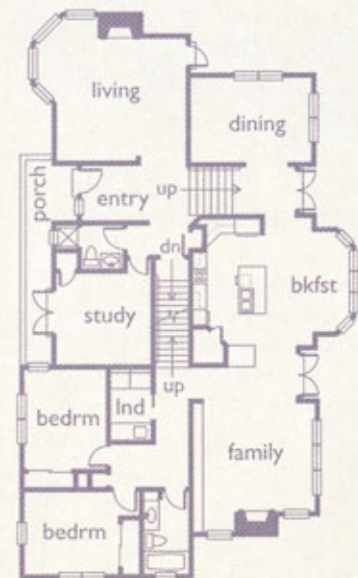
Restricted by the narrow, steeply pitched hillside lot, Wasney’s design paired a cedar-shingled facade with graduated levels that “step up” with the site to maximize building area and take advantage of hillside views. The kitchen, family room, dining room, and children’s bedrooms are situated on the main level of the house, making it the focus of family activity. The garage and a storage area occupy the lower level, while the upper level is devoted to the master suite. A wide, sun-filled gallery bisects the sprawling space, providing a constant source of natural light and easy access to the backyard. “The kids always complain that there are no dark places in which to hide,” says Tom Counts. “But that’s one of the main things Annette and I like about the house.”

**OPPOSITE ABOVE:** The 16’ x 16’ family room opens directly into the kitchen. Built-in shelves and cabinets hold books, a TV, and audio equipment. **OPPOSITE BELOW:** The Counts family eats all its meals at the Mission-inspired trestle table in the sunny breakfast nook. **ABOVE:** The kitchen anchors the main living areas, opening into the family room on one side and the dining room on the other (see plans).

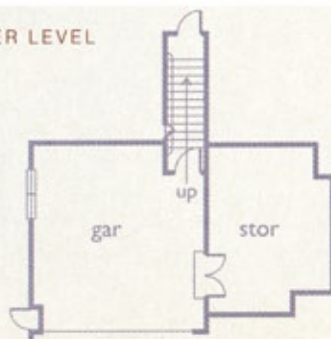
UPPER LEVEL 0 5 10 20 ft.



MAIN LEVEL



LOWER LEVEL





fit for a family







SITUATED ON ITS  
OWN SEPARATE FLOOR,  
THE MASTER SUITE  
IS A WELCOME OASIS  
OF CALM IN A BUSY  
HOUSEHOLD

The couple incorporated low-maintenance materials and kid-friendly finishes throughout. Easy-care slate tile flooring was installed in the light-filled front entry and extended to transition areas and outdoor thresholds. In the kitchen, granite-clad countertops are not only attractive, but also impervious to most spills and stains.

For the Counts family, comfort takes precedence over formal furnishings and fancy fixtures. "This isn't a precious house," says Annette. "A family lives here. I don't want people to have to worry about taking off their shoes."

●for product information, see page 162

**OPPOSITE:** With attic space eliminated, ceilings in the master suite follow the rooflines and soar to 13'. **ABOVE:** An 8' glass wall separates the whirlpool tub from the shower. **RIGHT:** Clean, bright, and uncluttered, the 15' x 15' master bath features dual sinks, plenty of under-counter storage, and a heated towel rack.



#### DESIGNING FAMILY-STYLE

●Disregard room labels. The homeowners transformed a little-used formal dining room into a much-needed playroom. "I can always reclaim it when the kids are older," says Annette. ●Provide a nearby play area. Two sets of French doors on the main level offer easy access to the backyard. ●Balance style with function. Although she loves her maple-sheathed Sub-Zero refrigerator, Annette wishes she'd chosen a magnet-friendly model instead to display her children's artwork.